South Carolina

YOUNG FARMER and FUTURE FARMER

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Notes from the Executive Secretary

To Young Farmers

By Tommy Gladden

The 39th Annual State Young Farmers Convention was truly an outstanding event. The meetings were well attended. The highlight of the convention was the awards banquet Friday night where 219 members and guests enjoyed the recognition of our top members and our keynote speaker. The officer team should be credited for their hard work in preparing and running such a convention. Our sponsors and exhibitors again played an important role in adding to the atmosphere of the convention. We appreciate their work and look forward to their continued support.

This is the time of year when most chapters are at their busiest. Chapters will soon be submitting membership rosters and dues to the state office. I encourage each chapter to complete their membership roster which they should be receiving shortly and submit their dues as soon as possible. Teachers who do not currently have an active chapter are encouraged to start their own chapter. If you need any information or help, please contact me or one of the state officers. A Young Farmer chapter can do much to support a vocational agriculture program and a strong chapter will benefit the FFA program, the community, as well as the members it serves.

Plans have already been made for this year's summer tour. Dekalb-Pfizer Genetics through the cooperation of Casey Pitts will be sponsoring a tour of their research center in Goldsboro, North Carolina. The date is set for July 24-25. Members and chapters should put this date on their calendar now to attend.

To Future Farmers

By J. Earl Frick, Jr.

The spring season brings thoughts of the outdoors, the beach and the Cherry Grove FFA Camp. A brand new 1800 square foot swimming pool is ready for use by FFA campers this summer, along with the other recreational and educational activities that have been a part of the camping program. A program in Hunter Safety was offered one week last summer for the first time, and plans are to involve the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department to sponsor the program this year.

Regular FFA camp will be open June 15-19, June 29-July 3, and July 6-10.

The Leadership Conference for Chapter Officers is set for June 23-26.

Be sure to check with your advisor and submit your reservations to attend camp early. And remember that the camp is open for FFA chapters during the weekends in the spring and fall. Approximately 175 members can be accommodated each week, so make your plans now to attend and participate.

The Leadership Conference for chapter officers will be held June 23-26. A program has been planned to provide FFA members with the opportunity to develop and strengthen leadership skills, participate in committee work, and participate in a simulated parent-member banquet. Organized recreational activities also are a part of the program.

Make your plans early to ensure your chapter an opportunity to participate.

Also we need you to attend the summer camping program so your camp can continue to be successful.

Cover Photo

A.F. "Frankie" Woodard III of St. Johns Young Farmer Chapter, Darlington, takes a look at his winter cover crops which are utilized for forage, erosion control and soil improvement.

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Young Farmers 39th Annual Convention Brings Awards And New Information In Agriculture

A.F. "Frankie" Woodard III of St. Johns Young Farmer Chapter in Darlington, was honored as Young Farmer of the Year by the South Carolina Association of Young Farmers at its recent awards banquet at the Radisson Hotel in Columbia.

An engraved silver bowl and $300 cash were presented to Mr and Mrs. Woodard by Maxey Love, Jr., chief executive officer of the Farm Credit Banks of Columbia. The award is sponsored by the Farm Credit Services in South Carolina.

The awards recognition also included presentation of an engraved tray and $150 in cash to District Young Farmer of the Year winners. They included Tony Riddle of Saluda Young Farmer Chapter, District 1; and Jacob S. Riser of Bowman, District 4.

State and district winners in seven additional contests, and representatives of sponsoring firms who presented awards follow:

Young Farmer Chapter Contest: Bowman, Perry Arant, president, and Landy Weathers, chapter advisor; first place state winner, presented by Jim Loftis of Atlanta, Ga., Gold Kist, Inc.; and District Winners Saluda Chapter, Tony Riddle, president; and John Crawford, advisor; York-Hickory Grove, William Nance, president, and Frank Sandifer, advisor; and Brittons Neck, James W. Lovell, Jr., president, and Jerry Pace, advisor.

Livestock Production Awards presented by Frank McLeod of Orangeburg for Central Soya, Inc.: Charles Long of Saluda, first in beef production; Hugh E. Weathers of Bowman, first in dairy production; Frazier "Buck" Riley of Saluda, second place in dairy; and G. Davis McClam of Darlington, first place in swine production, and Freddy Jaques of Bowman, second place in swine.

Three-Acre Corn Contest Non-Irrigated: Donnie Whisenhunt of Orangeburg-Calhoun Chapter with a yield of 158.68 bushels per acre, state winner; and District Winners Jefferson H. Wilson of Chester; and Eldred Williams of Gresham.

Three-Acre Corn Contest, Irrigated: one entry, Johnny Ross of Society Hill, member of the St. Johns, Darlington, Chapter.

Five-Acre Soybean, Non-irrigated: Donnie Whisenhunt of Orangeburg-Calhoun Chapter, with a yield of 41.84 bushels per acre, state winner; and Gregg Thomas of Edgefield, district winner.

Energy Efficiency: Julian Murray of Florence and member of St. John's Chapter, state winner; and District Winners Charles Long of Saluda, Steve Stowe of York and Ronald Myers of Bowman.

Forest Management Awards presented by Tom Clonts of Columbia for Stone Container Corporation: Harry Wimberly of Bowman first place, and John Felder of Bowman second place.

Chapter President Awards: Tony Riddle of Saluda, state winner; and District Winners William Nance of York Chapter, Mike Dorriety of Lamar Chapter, and Melvin L. Crum of Orangeburg County Chapter.

Outstanding Service Awards: Edsel Thomas of Edgefield, David Koon of Progressive Chapter at Landrum; Jimmy Dowling of Saluda, Wes McKeown of Blackstock, T.H. Keitt of Orangeburg County Chapter, Coleman Dyches of Holly Hill, Earnest Howard of East Clarendon, Leon West of Bowman, and Duvall Williams of Brittons Neck.

St. John's Chapter at Darlington was presented an award for largest attendance at the convention.

Convention speakers included Dr. Benton Box, acting vice president of the College of Agriculture and Forestry at Clemson University; and Earl Bedenbaugh, deputy administrator of ASCS, Washington, D.C., who spoke during the Friday afternoon session; and Walt Buescher of Pigeon Forge, Tenn., banquet speaker Friday night.

Doctor Box discussed developments in Biotechnology, microbiology, tissue culture, and genetic engineering with its wide range of application. New technology will have profound affect on world economy and politics, he said.

"We will be putting this new information into the classrooms as it is discovered...If small and moderate size farms are to survive, they will need to adapt these new technical discoveries," he continued.

"As we reduce carry-over inventories, we will see prices improve," Mr. Bedenbaugh noted.

"The productivity of the land is the most important resource we have in this

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New officers of the South Carolina Association of Young Farmers include, left to right, Watson Dorn of Saluda, vice president, District 1; Rusty Darby of Chester, past president; Marshall Flowers of Darlington, president; and Archie Felder of Bowman, president-elect. Back row, Hugh Weathers of Bowman, vice president, District 4; Joey Wilson of Chester, vice president, District 2; and A.F. "Frankie" Woodard, of Darlington, vice president, District 3

Young Farmer Convention

Continued from Page 3

country...In the future you will need to put as much emphasis on merchandizing and marketing as you do in producing," he emphasized.

Mr. Bedenbaugh also stressed paying off debt, and observed that "when I buy anything else, I am going to own what I bought last.

"Take a careful look at your operation, analyze it, identify areas of successful practices and apply business principles to that farm and survive," Mr. Bedenbaugh continued.

More emphasis on sales and marketing of farm commodities is essential to successful and profitable farm production and will serve as a means to solve carry-over inventories of farm products, Mr. Buescher emphasized.

Greetings from the South Carolina Association of Future Farmers were presented Saturday morning by Patricia Port of Pleasant Hill FFA Chapter, State FFA president.

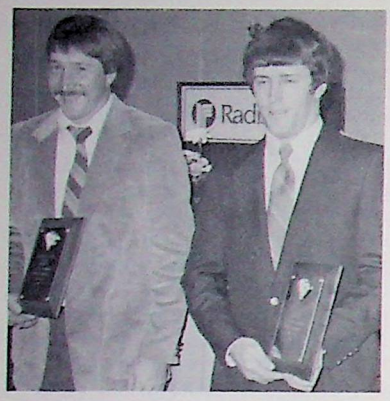
A report on the National Young Farmer Educational Institute in Oklahoma City, Okla. was presented by Harry Wimberly of Bowman Chapter.

A.F. "Frankie" Woodard of Darlington, and William Clark of Edgefield presented a report on the Young Farmer tour last summer.

The "Ladies Program" Friday afternoon featured a presentation, "Looking Good, Feeling Good, Food Makes the Difference" by Marilyn Brady Whorton, R.D.,Children's Hospital Dietician/Richland Memorial Hospital.. Others taking part on the program included Cindy Darby, Kathi Flowers, Regina Clark, Susan Felder, Reka Wimberly, and Connie Woodard.

Nine past presidents of the South Carolina Association of Young Farmers attended the convention.

The list was headed by P.J. Newton of McColl who served as the second president of the association in 1950. Others included Alvin E. DeWitt of Darlington, Larry W. Patrick of Bowman, Cecil M. Rogers of Lake View, Ray Galloway of Darlington, Todd Arant and Landy Weathers of Bowman and Dan Alt of Chester.



Charles Long of Saluda, and Steve Stowe of York received district awards in Energy Efficiency competition. District winners also included Ronald Myers of Bowman, not shown.

Donnie Whisenhunt of Orangeburg-Calhoun Young Farmer Chapter was first place state winner in soybeans and corn non-irrigated. He was presented the two top awards by Casey Pitts of Pfizer Genetics of Sumter.

Baxter Sowell of The Nitragin Company, Macon, Ga., presents Chapter President awards to, left to right, Melvin L. Crum of Orangeburg County Chapter, and Mike Dorriety of Lamar Chapter; district awards and Tony Riddle of Saluda Chapter, state winner. District winners also included William Nance of York Chapter.

Forest management award went to Harry Wimberly of Bowman, left, first place; and Archie Felder of Bowman who received the second place award for John Felder.

Farm Safety

Five to six hundred farm tractor fatalities and thousands of crippling injuries occur each year. This was emphasized in the FFA Safety Campaign conducted during the past year.

Most of these injuries could have been avoided if tractor operators had taken the time to follow safety precautions they already knew. The leading cause of these farm tractor fatalities included:

Rollovers.

Runovers.

Unguarded PTOS (Power Take-off)

During the busy farm season of summer and each day its too easy to assume that everything is ok and to neglect safety precautions.

Remember Murphy's Law pertaining to safety: "If it can happen it will happen" if we don't foresee it and prevent it.

It may be a good idea to look ahead and try to foresee and analyze potential situations that may endanger safety. Too many things that we don't think of can occur to overlook the known safety practices we can apply.

Calendar of Coming Events

March 21 32nd SCFFA Soil Identification And Land Treatment Meet, Florence
April 4 SCFFA Livestock Judging, Clemson
April 11 Forest Products Harvesting Contest Manchester State Park
June 10-12 SCFFA State Convention, Clemson
June 15 Cherry Grove FFA Camp Opens
June 23-24 SCFFA Leadership Conference, Cherry Grove FFA Camp
July 24-25 South Carolina Young Farmer Summer Tour, Goldsboro, N.C.
July 27-29 South Carolina Agricultural Teachers Conference, Columbia
October South Carolina State Fair
November National FFA Convention Kansas City, Mo.

Dr. Benton Box of Clemson University, displays a small peach plant grown from tissue culture in an address to the State Young Farmer Convention.

Walt Buescher of Pigeon Forge, Tenn., emphasized sales and marketing of agriculture products at the banquet session.

Winners in the Young Farmer Chapter Contest included, left to right, York-Hickory Grove, Frank Sandifer, agriculture teacher; and William Nance, chapter president; Bowman, Perry Arant, president; Saluda Chapter, John Crawford, agriculture teacher, and Tony Riddle, chapter president; and Jim Loftis of Atlanta, Ga., who presented the awards for Gold Kist, Inc., sponsor of the contest.

Maxey Love, Jr. of Farm Credit Banks of Columbia, presents Young Farmer of the Year Awards to Tony Riddle of Saluda, and Jacob Riser of Bowman, district winners; and Frankie Woodard of Darlington, State winner.

Young Farmer of the Year

"Keep Debt Load to a Minimum"

Born a farmer, and later earning a degree in agronomy, the South Carolina Young Farmer of the Year never did get completely away from the farm, although challenges of other career opportunities came knocking on the door.

While still a student at Clemson, A.F. "Frankie" Woodard III of Darlington, could hardly wait to get back on the tractor for planting and growing crops during the summer season.

Mr. Woodard and his wife, "Connie" were presented an engraved silver bowl and $300 in cash at the annual convention of the South Carolina Association of Young Farmers January 16 in Columbia. The Young Farmer of the Year recognition was presented by Maxey Love, Jr., chief executive officer of the Farm Credit Banks of Columbia which sponsors the award.

The Young Farmer of the Year and his family owns and operates a large diversified farming program which includes tobacco, cotton, corn, wheat, soybeans and brood cows. He is active in the St. Johns Young Farmer Chapter where Alex Yarborough, agriculture teacher, works with chapter members in conducting agricultural education programs to upgrade farm production and efficiency of young farmers in the community.

"One of the biggest factors in farming is that we cannot control the weather," Mr. Woodard recently observed following a long hot and dry summer during which he applied irrigation at night.

"Also, I feel a farmer or anyone should go slowly and keep the debt load to a minimum," he added.

"We try to maintain as low a debt as possible, and try to operate as much as we can on the "pay as you go" principle. We save a lot on interest doing it this way, especially with short range financing and then paying it back as soon as possible," he continued.

He noted that cotton and corn would undoubtedly benefit from irrigation, but that would mean spending a lot more money. "I can manage the debt we have right now, but I don't want to get any deeper," he said.

"By reducing interest we are able to retain more of what we earn.

"One of the many things I learned from my father is to make efficient use of equipment, not to borrow more than you have to, then pay it off as soon as possible," Mr. Woodard continued.

Driving his pick-up along the highway by his farm one cold and bustery winter afternoon in February, Mr. Woodard pointed to a field seeded to a winter grain. "We plant rye for grazing, and what seed is left we plant for cover crops. Then all of the cover crop seeded areas are turned under in the spring and prepared for summer planting," he said. Strong winds were observed eroding soil from recently plowed fields not seeded to cover crops.

Mr. Woodard and his wife Connie, and their three children, Shawn, Wes, and Ty, live in their modern home of early American Cape Cod architecture that fits well into the Pee Dee Region.

He has known for a long time that agriculture and the natural resources represent for him a way to enjoy a living and to provide an environment in which to rear a fine family. It is easy to see why this family that cares so much for the out-of-doors and the lifestyle of rural living can enjoy being home on the farm.

The entire family including his parents are involved in farming. His father, now retired, helps with the farming operation, and his mother keeps most of the records. His wife Connie, is employed by Diamond Hill Plywood Company, a building materials distributor. Each one enjoys living in the country, and riding horses provide additional pleasure for the family.

"An understanding wife is one of the essential ingredients in any successful business, but particularly agriculture," he said.

Recounting his wife's interest in agriculture, he added, "She is the one who lets me farm."

Mr. Woodard has been farming full-

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First place livestock awards presented to, left to right, Davis McClam of Darlington, swine production; Charles Long of Saluda, beef production; and Frazier "Buck" Riley of Saluda, second in dairy. First place dairy went to Hugh E. Weathers of Bowman, not shown.

Casey Pitts of DeKalb-Pfizer Genetics at Sumter, and Mr. and Mrs. Hugh McClimon of Columbia, are shown at the head table during the banquet session.

Connie and A.F. "Frankie" Woodard III of St. Johns Young Farmer Chapter at Darlington, left photograph, portray the happiness of achievement as they receive the Young Farmer of the Year award from Maxey Love, Jr., chief executive officer of the Farm Credit Banks of Columbia, sponsor of the award. They are shown right with their family around the Christmas tree last Christmas season. The children include Shawn, Wes, and Ty.

time in the Mont Clare and Swift Creek areas of Darlington County since he was graduated from Clemson University with a degree in agronomy in 1979.

While at Clemson, instead of looking for greener pastures in other careers, Mr. Woodard looked forward to the summers when he could get back on the tractor and work on the farm.

The Young Farmer of the Year sees crop diversification in the more promising selected crops as making the difference on his farm. I am not against trying new things, but I like to see it proven first, he noted.

Either way you go in farming, the Woodard farm is an indication that it takes a lot of equipment. Taking care of this equipment, repairs and maintenance, is one way that Mr. Woodard keeps operating costs low enough to maximize profits. When the planting, tilling and harvesting are complete, Mr. Woodard fills available time inspecting and maintaining equipment.

He keeps routinely required parts and supplies on hand for emergencies to reduce down time and expense of making repairs and adjustments at the farm.

A large metal building which houses a spacious farm shop, provides adequate space to accommodate repairs and storage for supplies, seed stock, and equipment.

Mr. Woodard is a member of the St. Johns Young Farmer Chapter where Alex C. Yarborough is agriculture teacher and chapter advisor. He is a vice president from District 3 of the State Association of Young Farmers.

He is a member of the Farm Bureau Board of Directors, and has served as Farm Bureau Young Farmer president. He was a participant in the 1986 Phillip Morris Agriculture Leadership Development Program, and is a member of Alpha Gamma Rho National Agricultural Fraternity.

The Young Farmer and his family are members of Black Creek Baptist Church at Dovesville where he has been active in the work of the Sunday School and church.

Pelion Future Farmers load hay at the Lexington Vocational Center which was the distribution center for the Massachusetts FFA Hay Lift last summer.

Frankie Woodard, left, and John Catoe of Bishopville, local equipment dealer, discuss how to set calibration on a new sprayer pump.

32 Sponsors Contribute To Success of YF Goals

The success of the South Carolina Association of Young Farmers and its members depends to a large extent on business firms who contribute and sponsor contest awards, provide information and assist with educational programs in Young Farmer Chapters in the State, and set up exhibits at the annual convention.

Thirty-two business firms worked with the South Carolina Young Farmers during the past year. As a token of its appreciation and gratitude for their support, the association recognizes these contributions as a group in the listing that follows:

Agratech Seeds, Inc.
Archer Daniels Midland
Carolina Power & Light Company
Central Soya, Inc.
CIBA-Geigy
Columbia Bank for Cooperatives
ConAgra, Inc.
Continental Grain Company
DeKalb-Pfizer Genetics
Diversified Marketing Associates
Duke Power Company
Farm Credit Services in South Carolina
Georgia-Pacific Corporation
Gold Kist, Inc.
ICI Americas, Inc.
L.B. Wannamaker Seed Company, Inc.
Mixon Seed Company
Moody Godley Auction Company
Moorman Manufacturing Company
Phillip Morris U.S.A.
Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
South Carolina Electric & Gas Company
South Carolina Farm Bureau
South Carolina Pork Board
New Holland Inc.
Stauffer Chemical Company
Stone Container, Inc.
The Nitragin Company
Walnut Grove Auction Sales, Inc.
Seedtec International
Northrup King
South Carolina State Family Farm Development Authority

FFA Leadership Conference, June 23-26.

FFA Chapter Officers should plan now to Attend.

FFA Camp Opens June 15

"Welcome to Cherry Grove FFA Camp" is the title of a brochure now being distributed to Future Farmers throughout the State.

The South Carolina FFA Camping Program will get underway June 15, Hugh P. McClimon of Columbia, State Supervisor of Vocational Agriculture and FFA advisor, has announced.

The one-week segments of camping activities will include recreational and learning experiences.

The camp will be open to all FFA Chapters during June and July. Camp activities are directed by a capable staff of counselors. Those attending camp will be under the supervision of their advisor.

FFA Camp is a learning experience where one can meet others and have the opportunity to participate in many activities. Development of personal leadership skills, teamwork and cooperation is emphasized in the camping program. Activities are directed by a capable staff of counselors.

Special interest and educational programs include hunter safety, boating, archery, woodworking, electrification, track and field, Mr. McClimon said.

FFA Camp reservation forms may be obtained and returned to J. Earl Frick, Jr., District Consultant, Agricultural Education, 142B. South Dargan Street, Florence, S.C. 29501.

Computer Award

Patrick E. Settle of Inman, won fifth place among 43 students in the FFA Computers in Agriculture State award winners in the National FFA Computers in Agriculture Seminar during August in Washington, D.C.

The seminar encouraged the use of high-tech equipment in agriculture, according to Dr. Larry Case, National FFA Advisor. "With the business intensity of agriculture, accurate and up-to-date records make the difference between success and failure," he added.

Young Farmer Tour Set for July 24-25

The annual summer tour of the South Carolina Association of Young Farmers will be held July 24-25 at the DeKalb-Pfizer Research Center in Goldsboro, N.C., which is sponsoring the tour.

Casey Pitts of DeKalb-Pfizer Genetics will coordinate tour activities.

36 Green Hands

Thirty six new students of vocational agriculture at Belton-Honea Path High School were presented the Green Hand degree during a banquet last December at the school.

Four outstanding parents and teachers received the Honorary Chapter Farmer degree according to Harold Mackey, teacher-advisor of the chapter.

Attendance included 257 parents and students.

Mr. Mackey in presenting the degrees explained that there are four degrees of active membership based upon achievement in the FFA. These include Green Hand, Chapter Farmer, State Farmer, and American Farmer. The national organization sets the standards for these degrees.

Gregg Thomas and Jerry Jackson, both of Edgefield Young Farmer Chapter, register for the convention.

Bobby Edens and Charles T. Edens of Hillcrest Young Farmer Chapter at Dalzell, register for the convention.

Set Goals... Attend National FFA Convention

Now is the time for Future Farmers to start setting goals to attend the 1987 National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Mo. by planning contest entries and commitment to earn a convention trip.

The 59th National FFA Convention last November was a great one of which many highlights were reported in the previous issue of this magazine.

Registration included amost 22,000 Future Farmers. South Carolina had a delegation of 150, its largest in several years.

Many Future Farmers and advisors arrived during a bad winter storm in the plains, including snow accumulations which may have delayed many chapters who drove. The same weather had already hit Kansas City by the time the South Carolina delegation arrived in below freezing temperatures Wednesday afternoon to see their first snow of the year, and perhaps the first snow for a few. It was mighty cold. Local citizens remarked that they missed seeing the blue and gold jackets during the convention, since most often the jackets were covered with some kind of overcoat.

Regardless of the weather, an informative and intersting convention brought a warm response from those attending. The weather had pretty much returned to normal sunshine and warmth by the time the convention ended on Saturday.

Some of the scenes about Kansas City and activities, during the flight of the South Carolina delegation to and from Kansas City are planned for the next issue of this magazine.

YF Spokesperson for Agriculture

Landy Weathers of Bowman, represented South Carolina in the National Young Farmer Spokesperson for Agriculture Contest last November in Oklahoma City, Okla.

The purpose of this contest, now in its 12th year, is to encourage young farmers to develop articulate responses to urban consumers' concerns about agriculture and to provide an opportunity for the spokespersons to talk with the news media, consumers and consumer leaders throughout the country.

In his address, Mr. Weathers discussed how to get the most from your food dollar.

The contest was sponsored by Elanco Products, a division of Eli Lilly and Company, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Representatives of the South Carolina Association of Young Farmers who attended the recent National Young Farmer Institute in Oklahoma, Okla. are shown above. They include, front row, Tommy Gladden of the Department of Education in Columbia, State Young Farmer executive secretary; Mrs. Dan Alt and Mr. Alt, and their children of Chester. Back row, Jerry Pace, advisor of Brittons Neck Chapter; Landy Weathers and Harry Wimberly of Bowman, and Marshall Flowers of Darlington, president of South Carolina Young Farmers.

J.B. Earle Speaks to Soil Districts

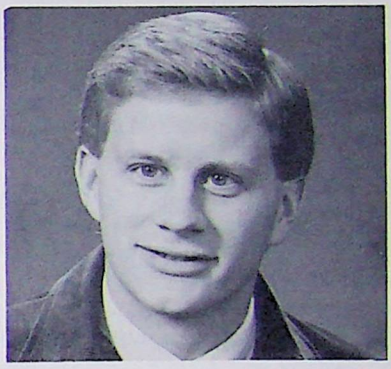
J.B. "Joe" Earle of Alexandria, La., an active supporter of the SCFFA Soil Judging activities some years ago, was a featured speaker at the annual conference of the South Carolina Association of Conservation Districts in Columbia.

Mr. Earle, a retired state conservationist with the USDA Soil Conservation Service at Alexandria, La., spent the first 20 years of his career in South Carolina and was with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service in South Carolina when he accepted a position with the SCS in Louisiana.

Many agriculture teachers and former Future Farmers will remember Mr. Earle from his work with the vocational agricultural departments and with the State FFA Soil Judging activities.

A brother, E.B. Earle, teaches agriculture at McBee.

He was introduced as the banquet speaker by R.T. Harris of Westminster, president of SCACD, and a retired teacher of vocational agriculture.



Dean Harder

Future Farmers Meet June 10-12, Clemson

The 60th annual convention of the South Carolina Future Farmers of America will be held June 10-12 at Clemson University.

Convention speakers will include Dean Harder of Mountain Lake, Minn., Central region vice president of the National FFA.

The national officer has served as the Minnesota State FFA president, as treasurer of his district, and FFA chapter president. He was active in public speaking, parliamentary procedure and livestock judging contests, and holds the American Farmer degree.

State FFA officers who will preside during the convention include Patricia Port of Pleasant Hill, president; Kenneth Thompkins of Mullins, secretary; and Vice Presidents William H. Ray, Jr. of Hunter-Kinard-Tyler; Russell Green, Jr. of Mayo; Jimmy Smith of Strom Thurmond, and Roy Patterson, Jr., of York.

FFA Project Expands

"Into An Old-Timey Country Fair"

The influence of vocational agricultural education programs in local communities reflects the accomplishments of Future Farmers and agricultural teachers working together to teach and apply learning experiences to community projects and activities. These community projects often make long-time contributions to economic progress and development of the community. This issue of the magazine takes a look at one of these activities started 30 years ago in Greenville County.

As October approaches each year, an air of excitement premeates the Simpsonville-Fountain Inn Communities as preparations are made for the opening of the South Greenville Fair and Horse Show.

This activity got underway 30 years ago with a "Poultry Chain" sponsored by the Vocational Agricultural Education Department at Simpsonville High School.

What started out as a poultry project soon grew into an old-timey traditional country fair with community-wide involvement in a wide variety of events. Today, the South Greenville Fair is very much a Simpsonville-Fountain Inn homecoming. It brings heavy student and adult involvement from all sectors under the leadership of the Board of Directors along with Ms Lucy Babb, home economics teacher, and Clark Woods, vocational agriculture teacher at Hillcrest High School.

M. O. Alexander, general manager who started the fair 30 years ago, recalled some of the early activities last October as he talked with visitors as exhibitors set up displays at Hillcrest High School.

"We started it as a 'Poultry Chain' project for the Simpsonville FFA Chapter 30 years ago. I was the agriculture teacher and we gave the Future Farmers baby chicks in April. They would grow them out during the summer as a part of their supervised farming projects, then return them in the fall when we would auction off a certain number of chicks. Money made on those sold was used to buy chickens for distribution again the next spring."

Soon a pig chain was added that operated along the same lines. It was a hands-on-learning experience for the students as well as the beginning of a 30 year tradition.

In 1957 the high schools at Fountain Inn, Simpsonville, and for a time Mauldin, were consolidated into Hillcrest High School. "The fair served as a catalyst to help bring the community together, I think. The rather new event also smoothed away an ancient Simpsonville-Fountain Inn sports rivalry too," he recalled.

"Not long after its small beginning,the fair featured a dairy show, then a flower exhibit. Parents worked to add more events. The next important step was the participation of local industry which contributed exhibits and financial aid," Mr. Alexander said.

Traditional country fair exhibits last October included home crafts, dairy and beef shows, cooking, needlework, hobby, crafts and art contests along with a show of dogs, pets, and horses. There were agricultural and industrial displays as well as a flea market sponsored by community and school clubs.

Today the fair brings people together into the school to visit exhibits and talk about things that have happened during the past year.

Other agriculture teachers who have assisted with the Fair and taught at Hillcrest during the years have included W.H. Chastain who taught agriculture there for many years, Arthur Nichols, Marshall Nichols, Wilson Riggens, and E.M. Jamison. Clark Woods now serves as agriculture teacher at Hillcrest.

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Larry Davis, Jr. of Byrnes FFA, is shown right grooming his yearling heifer for entry in the South Greenville Fair at Hillcrest Senior High School. Others in the picture include, left to right, Larry Davis, Sr., a former Future Farmer, and T. Lloyd Garrett, director of the Fair and in charge of beef Cattle Department, center.

The South Greenville Fair brought a touch of affection between agriculture and the young generation as shown here by Cody Clark, Zachary Dickson, and Kristi Simpson as they reach out to touch one of the show animals.

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The fair also strengthens farming roots in a growing industrial community which has been traditionally close to the soil. Although times have changed, Hillcrest High School still has 145 students who are preparing for agribusiness careers through the vocational agriculture classes.

Now retired from his 33 years of teaching vocational agriculture, Mr. Alexander is representing his community as House District 27 member of the State General Assembly in Columbia.

Mr. Alexander serves as general manager of the fair which is conducted each year in cooperation with the Greenville County School District, the industrial community, and citizens. The board of directors also include Jack E. Powers, President; Lucy Babb, vice president; Betty C. Chandler, secretary-treasurer; Lloyd Garrett, Leroy Hamilton, and Clark Woods.

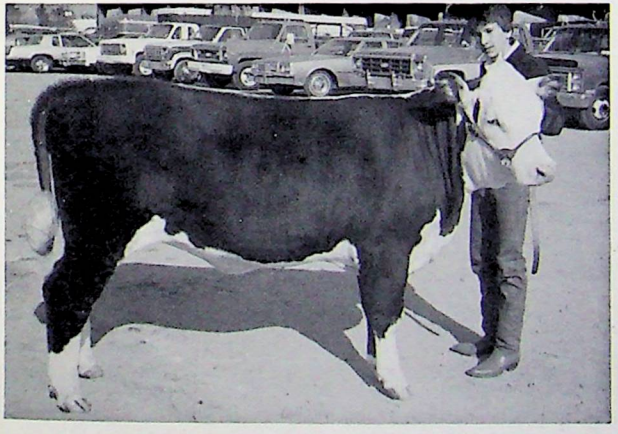
Hereford Queen

Mary Shirley of West-Oak FFA Chapter and South Carolina Hereford Queen assists in awarding ribbons at South Carolina State Fair. She also showed in the Junior Beef Show.

South Greenville Fair

Preparing exhibits for the South Greenville fair include, left to right, Mrs. Sarah Stewart, co-chairman, seated; M.O. Alexander, former agriculture teacher at Hillcrest and one of the founders of the fair; Jack Powers, president of the South Greenville Fair; Wallace Stewart, head of agricultural display; and Ralph Chandler, former chairman of the Greenville County School Board who has worked in support of the fair.

S.C. State Fair



Burris Anderson of West-Oak FFA Chapter, prepares his animal for showing in the Polled Hereford Early Junior Yearling Heifer Class at the SC State Fair.

Kim McMullen of Crescent FFA Chapter showed the grand champion and reserve champion Shorthorn in the Junior Beef Cattle Show at the State Fair. She also was first place showmanship in Shorthorns.

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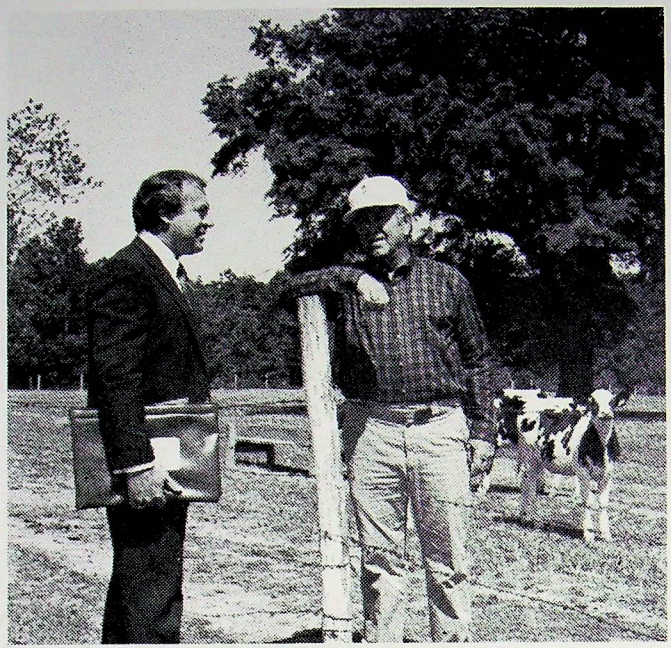

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